

Message Text

SECRET POSS DUPE

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ACTION NEA-12

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R 121251Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4792

INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL

S E C R E T TEHRAN 8777

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IR, AF

SUBJECT: IRAN-AFGHAN RELATIONS

1. WE NOTE HERE A KIND OF AMBIVALENCE THESE DAYS ON THE SUBJECT OF IRAN-AFGHAN RELATIONS. ON THE ONE HAND, THE NEW AFGHAN AMBASSADOR FINDS NOTHING BUT FRIENDLINESS ON THE PART OF GOI AUTHORITIES WITH WHOM HE HAS DEALT DURING THREE WEEKS HE HAS BEEN HERE. ON THE OTHER, THE SHAH TALKING WITH GENERAL BRETT THIS WEEK PLAYED UP SOVIET MODERNIZING OF THE AFGHAN ARMY AND DIFFICULTIES WHICH THE AFGHAN AUTHORITIES ARE ALLEGEDLY MAKING FOR IRANIAN TRAVELERS TO KABUL.

2. THE NEW AFGHAN AMBASSADOR, ZALMAY MAHMUD-GHAZI, MADE HIS COURTESY CALL ON ME DECEMBER 11. HE SAID THAT HE WAS BEING TREATED IN A MOST FRIENDLY FASHION BY ALL IRANIAN AUTHORITIES AND THAT HE SAW NO PROBLEMS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES WHICH COULD NOT BE RESOLVED. HE COMMENTED THAT THE WORK ON THE HELMAND RIVER TREATY DONE BY THE PREVIOUS AFGHAN ADMINISTRATION WAS THE ONE CONSTRUCTIVE ACCOMPLISHMENT IT HAD ON THE RECORD, LEAVING THE CLEAR IMPLICATION THAT THE NEW AFGHAN GOVERNMENT WOULD GET AROUND TO GIVING SOME KIND OF FAVORABLE APPROVAL TO WHAT HAD BEEN WORKED OUT BETWEEN THE GOI AND THE GOA. HE ALSO STATED THAT PRESIDENT

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DAUD HAD TOLD HIM BEFORE HE CAME TO TEHRAN THAT HE WAS BEING SENT TO KEEP RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES SMOOTH

AND TO RESOLVE IN A FRIENDLY MANNER WHATEVER DIFFERENCES THERE WERE OR WHICH MIGHT ARISE.

3. AS FOR GENERAL BRETT'S AUDIENCE WITH THE SHAH THIS WEEK, THE LATTER REFERRED TO THE SOVIET REARMING OF AFGHANISTAN IN A MORE ASSERTIVE WAY THAN HE HAS ON PREVIOUS OCCASIONS. HE CLAIMED TO HAVE INFORMATION ABOUT LARGE QUANTITIES OF SOVIET ARMS TO SPECIFIC AFGHAN ARMY DIVISIONS, ALTHOUGH HE MADE NO SPECIFIC MENTION OF THE TANK AND OTHER DELIVERIES KABUL HAS REPORTED. HIS REFERENCE TO THE TREATMENT OF IRANIAN CITIZENS TRAVELING TO AFGHANISTAN DEVELOPED A NEW THEME WHICH WE WERE HEARING FOR THE FIRST TIME. HIS CON- TENTION IS THAT THERE ARE HOLD-UPS ON THE BORDER, THAT MEN AND WOMEN ARE SEPARATED AND SEARCHED, AND THAT THE TREATMENT BEING GIVEN BY AFGHAN AUTHORITIES IS NOT IN KEEPING WITH NORMAL PROCEDURES BETWEEN FRIENDLY COUNTRIES.

4. AGAINST THE FOREGOING WE HAVE THE EVIDENCE OF THE RECENT BORDER CLASH IN WHICH SEVERAL AFGHANS WERE KILLED OR WOUNDED AND WHICH WAS HANDLED BY BOTH SIDES IN A VERY LOW- KEY AND WITH CONSIDERABLE DISPATCH. IN ADDITION, BORDER MARKERS ARE BEING PLACED IN AGREED LOCATIONS WITH APPARENT EASE. WE HAVE NO OTHER EVIDENCE OF FRICTION BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES BEYOND THAT ADDUCED BY THE SHAH TO GENERAL BRETT.

5. WE PASS ALONG THESE OBSERVATIONS FOR WHATEVER THEY MAY BE WORTH AND FOR WHATEVER COMMENT AMEMBASSY KABUL MAY CARE TO MAKE. PROGRESS BY THE GOA ON THE HELMAND TREATY WOULD GO A LONG WAY IN CHANGING THE SHAH'S ATTITUDE. DOES KABUL NOTE ANY MOVEMENT ON THIS ISSUE?
HELMS

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